

# 'Uthman ibn 'Affan

A biography of his life, may  
Allah be pleased with him,  
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# Uthman ibn Affan

رضي الله عنه

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## A Boy from Ta'if

Tens of torches were lit in one of the most beautiful houses in Ta'if as if it was having a celebration. In a spacious room, Affan, the owner of the house sat on a silk cushion waiting patiently for the happy news to come from the opposite room where his wife Arwah was delivering her baby that night. As Arwah was suffering the pains of delivery a group of women were encouraging her to be patient by saying that she would have a wonderful baby, as rich as his father.

In the corner of the room there was a woman called Sa'dah bint Kareez. She was Arwah's aunt. Sa'dah was reading the future. She said that her heart told her that this baby would have a great future and would be famous. Arwah shouted loudly and the baby took his way into life. The old woman who helped her with her delivery said, "It's a boy!" and asked the women to inform Affan of this good news. The news reached him very quickly and he was very happy, for often fathers want very much to have a boy. Affan ordered his servants to slaughter sheep and cook food. He invited his neighbours to come and celebrate with them the birth of Uthman, as his father

## A Boy from Ta'if

named the boy.

A very wonderful feast was served. The people couldn't remember such a great event in their lives as was this year. It was the sixth year after the "Year of the Elephant". So Uthman was six years younger than the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had been partly orphaned when his father died before he was born. When he was very little his mother Aminah had died too. He had been very poor, working as a shepherd in the desert. Uthman had been living well on the fortune of his father who was a rich merchant. They were relatives, for Uthman's grandmother was the Prophet's aunt. Uthman was brought up in a very rich house wearing the best clothes and eating tasty food. He was modest and generous unlike others living in the desert. He was brown and handsome. His father was an honoured man from Bani Umayyah. His mother too was an honoured woman, and she was from Bani Rabi'ah.

His father took Uthman with him on his journeys of trade. So he saw many countries and knew much about their cultures, religions and traditions. He was well educated. On one of his journeys, his father died. His mother married again, to a man called Uqbah ibn Mu'ayt, but Uthman did not like that. However his success as a merchant made up for that grief. Then he went to live in Makkah and there he made a friendship with one of its most respected merchants, Abu Bakr ibn Abi Quhafah. Uthman had a handsome



### *Uthman ibn Affan*

face and he was thin, and of medium height. As he came from the tribe called Bani Umayyah he was most respected and honoured. He was well known for his courtesy and for his modesty. He would fulfil his promise whatever it cost him.

When Uthman was over thirty, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, received the message from Allah. So he started to call some of the people to Allah secretly. Among them were his wife Khadijah, his cousin Ali, who was still a boy, and his friend Abu Bakr, who was the most active in calling people to believe the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

Uthman didn't know yet that the Prophet had been sent by Allah. One day, Uthman heard that Ruqayyah the daughter of the Prophet had become engaged to Utbah ibn Abi Lahab, who was a cousin of the Prophet. Uthman felt sad because he wanted to marry her. When Uthman met Abu Bakr, he told him about his feelings towards Ruqayyah. Abu Bakr found that this was a good opportunity to tell him about something more important:

"Uthman, you are an intelligent man. Why should you worship idols which cannot even hear or see?" asked Abu Bakr.

"Yes, they are as you say," replied Uthman.

"Muhammad ibn Abdullah has been sent to us as a Prophet by Allah," Abu Bakr told him, and then he told him the whole story of the revelation.

Uthman agreed to go with him to the Prophet's house. When they met the Messenger of Allah,

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Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, he asked Uthman to declare his Islam by repeating the *shahadah*, and he did. Then he told the Prophet about what his aunt had said when he was born. He told him that he himself had heard a voice telling him that there would be a prophet sent to this nation. On the same day as Uthman declared his Islam, Talha ibn Ubaidillah had become a Muslim as well.

The news of Uthman's Islam spread so quickly. It was something that people thought impossible because there was hostility between his tribe of Bani Umayyah and the Prophet's tribe of Bani Hashim. This hostility grew after the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was sent.

The news provoked his uncle, al-Hakam, who asked to see Uthman. He wanted to be sure about what he had heard. Uthman assured him that the news was true. He refused to go back to what he had been worshipping. His uncle was known for his rudeness and short temper. He began to torture him. Although Uthman was delicate, he was sincere about his Islam and he wasn't afraid of declaring it publicly. He endured everything just for the sake of Allah. His uncle gave up when he found that he couldn't divert him from his Islam.

So al-Hakam promised to take revenge on the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Al-Hakam made fun of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when he was walking. He imitated him. One day as he was



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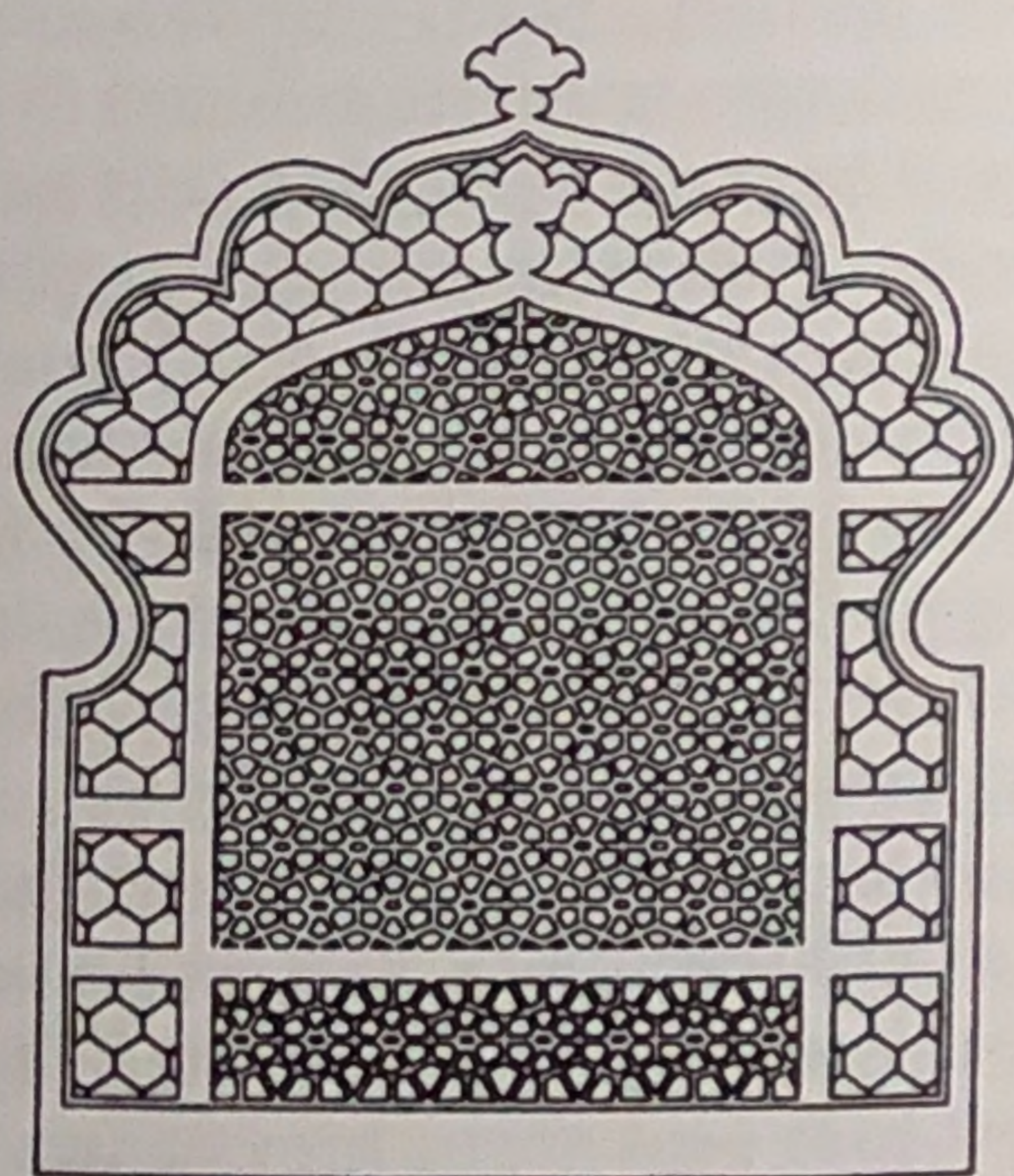
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doing those silly things, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, looked at him from his blessed eyes, and al-Hakam became paralysed. He remained like that for the rest of his life. Al-Hakam was not the only one who treated the Prophet badly. There was also Uqbah ibn Mu'ayt, the husband of Uthman's mother. He was even worse than al-Hakam. Uqbah went to his wife and told her that her son had declared his Islam. The mother said happily, "Who could not believe in Muhammad?" She said that she was ready to sacrifice everything for the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Uqbah nevertheless continued to hurt the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He waited for him to begin his prayer and then he would throw rubbish on him.



## Uthman as a Companion of the Prophet

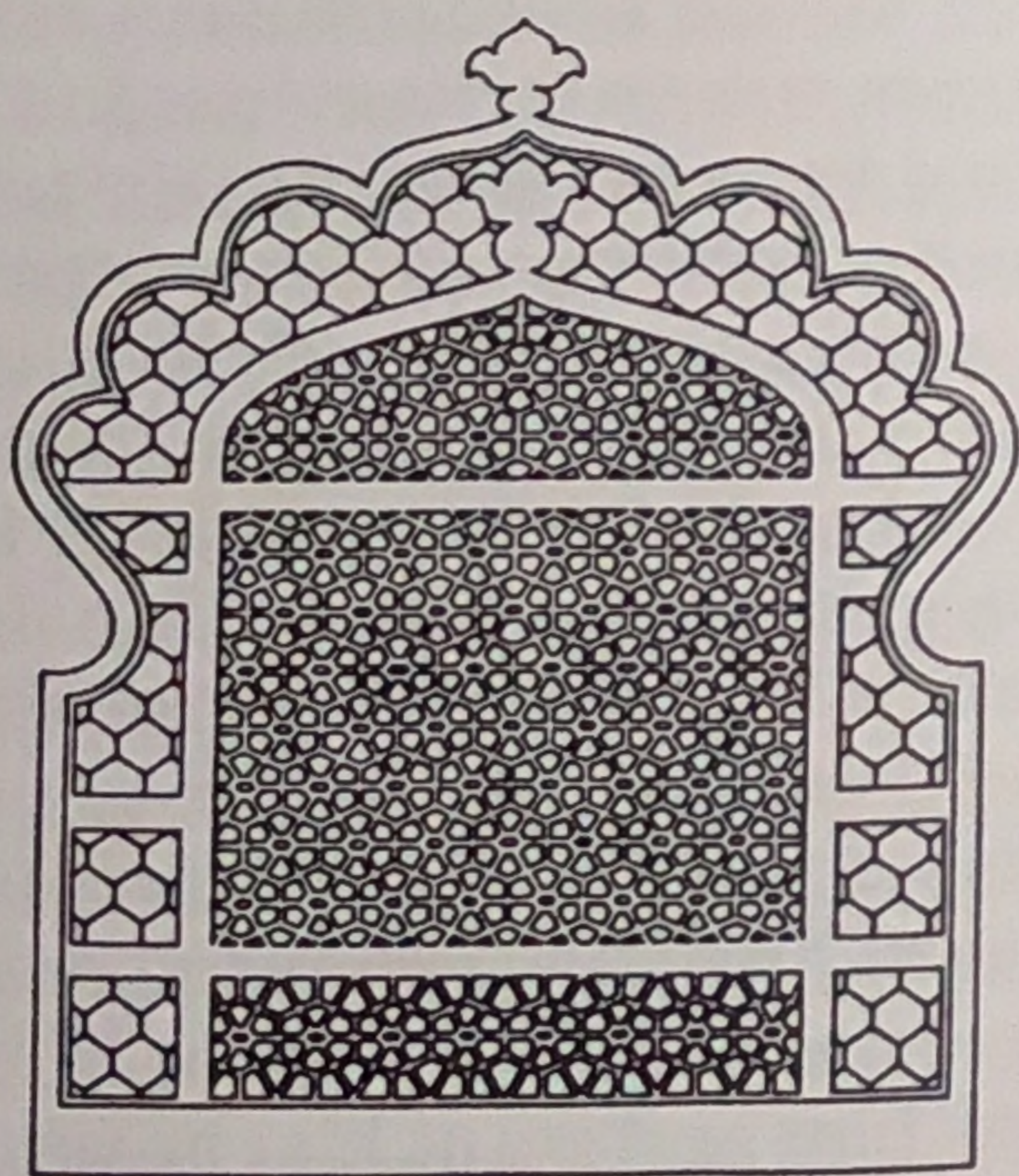
**T**he Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, loved Uthman. He agreed that he marry his daughter after she was divorced from her husband and before she entered his house. Uthman married Ruqayyah though he was twenty years older than her. They were a happy couple and they had a son called Abdullah.

Uthman and his family faced the same treatment from the disbelievers as other Muslims. Uthman was one of the closest companions of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He would write down the Qur'an when it was revealed. He would remember many of the things which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said and did. He continued to do so until the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ordered many of the Muslims to emigrate to Abyssinia. Uthman and Ruqayyah were among them. Uthman was the first of the emigrants, the Muhajirun, because he was sensitive. He didn't like the treatment the Quraysh gave to Muslims like Bilal ibn Rabah al-Habashi and Amir ibn Yasir and Amir's



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mother and father. He was perhaps also anxious that their hostility should hurt his wife. So he preferred to emigrate with the other Muhajirun to Abyssinia.

Uthman stayed in Abyssinia and the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, kept track of the news of Uthman and his wife. One day a woman told him that she saw Ruqayyah riding a camel with Uthman leading it. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was touched by the kindness of Uthman. He said that was too much for his daughter. He also said that Uthman was first man to emigrate for the sake of Allah since Ibrahim, peace be upon him.

Uthman stayed in Abyssinia until the Muslims in Makkah became stronger. When the Makkan Muslims emigrated to Madinah so did he. When the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was planning the houses of the Muhajirun he decided that Uthman's house should be opposite to his because he liked to talk to him so much.

When Uthman had settled in Madinah, he continued his life as a merchant. His trading allowed him to lead a comfortable life. As in Makkah, however, Uthman spent a lot of his life to help in calling people to Allah. One day, a Jew, who owned a well, was selling water to the Muslims for a high price. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said that if any Muslim bought that well and granted it to the Muslims, then Allah would reward him with a drink from Paradise. Uthman hurried to buy the

### *Uthman as a Companion of the Prophet*

well, but the Jew refused to sell the whole well. He agreed to sell half of the well to Uthman for 12,000 dirhams. The agreement was that Uthman owned the well for one day, and the Jew did the next day, and so on. When the day for Uthman was due the Muslims drank and took what they needed for the next day as well. The Jew realised that Uthman had tricked him, so he decided to sell the other half of the well to him. Uthman agreed to buy it but for a lower price than the first half.

In the second year of the Hijrah a great and important battle took place between the Muslims and Quraysh – Badr. Uthman didn't take part in Badr because he had to stay with his wife Ruqayyah who was very sick. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, allowed him to stay and take care of her. Unfortunately his wife died and she was buried on the same day that the news came of the Muslim victory.

The Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, must have felt great sorrow for the death of his daughter. He gave Uthman a share from the booty of Badr just as if he had been fighting there as a warrior. He regarded him as a Badri, as one of the people of that great battle. Then the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, agreed that Uthman could marry another daughter, Umm Kulthum. The Muslims have ever since called him Dhu'n-Nurayn, the "Owner of the Two Lights", because he was the only human being ever to marry two daughters of a prophet.



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Uthman took his role as a fighter in the way of Allah against the unbelievers, such as in the battle of Uhud. In that battle the Muslims had won, but then they stopped to gather up the booty. Khalid ibn al-Walid, who wasn't yet a Muslim, let his warriors round behind them and tried to finish the Muslims off. As the story spread that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was dead, then most of the Muslims fled. Uthman was among them. But the moment they knew that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was still alive they came right back into the battle and carried on fighting. Allah forgave them. He says:

**"Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met, it was Shaytan who caused them to slip because of some (wrong) that they had done. But Allah has blotted out (their mistake). Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing."**

Uthman was not a talented warrior like Ali ibn Abi Talib, or Hamzah ibn Abd al-Muttalib or az-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam. He was only an average fighter but he didn't miss a battle.

In the sixth year after the Hijrah the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, went with three hundred Muslims to perform the Umrah in Makkah. He went peacefully, not prepared for war. When Quraysh learnt this, they swore by their gods that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his companions would not enter Makkah. Some of their men went out to meet them at a place called





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Hudaybiyah. The Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, saw them coming. He decided to send Umar as his spokesman. Umar said that he would rather not go as he was from the small and unimportant tribe of Bani Adi who would not be able to support him if Quraysh decided to kill him. He suggested to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, that he send Uthman. Uthman was from a very great and respected tribe called Bani Umayyah.

Uthman was the messenger from the Prophet to Quraysh. He tried to persuade them to change their minds and let the Muslims visit the Ka'abah. He said that they had only come for that and not for fighting. Quraysh didn't accept that.

Meanwhile the Muslims began to worry because Uthman had been away a long time. Then the story was spread that Uthman was murdered. The Prophet asked them were they ready to fight Quraysh even though they were so few and had so few weapons. The Muslims agreed to fight until they were dead. As they made ready to fight, Uthman appeared with the news of his talks with Quraysh. They said that the Muslims must go back to Madinah this year and then return for the Hajj the next year. Then they would be allowed to stay for three days in Makkah. Then the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, met with some men of Quraysh and made an agreement with them. This was known as the agreement of Hudaybiyah. It was accepted by both sides.

### *Uthman ibn Affan*

Later, Uthman had a very important role in supplying the Muslims with weapons and supplies. That was when they went to face the Romans in Palestine. Some of the Arab tribes joined the people of Madinah so the army was very large. It would take a lot to supply such a large number of men. Uthman gave three hundred camels and one thousand dirhams and some gold. He put the coins in the Prophet's hands, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, for him to buy weapons. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was very affected by that and told him that Allah had forgiven whatever else he would do afterwards.

When later his second wife Umm Kulthum died the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said that if he had another daughter he would marry her to Uthman but he had no more.

The Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, described Uthman as a most modest and truthful man. One day the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was sitting with his clothing drawn up a little exposing a part of his leg. Abu Bakr asked permission to enter and came in and sat down. Then Umar asked permission to enter and came in and sat down. Then Uthman came and asked to see the Prophet. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, loosened his clothing in order to cover the little bit of his leg that was showing. Then he told Uthman to come in. When they had all left, Aishah asked him the reason for what he had done. He said



### *Uthman as a Companion of the Prophet*

that even the angels feel shy in the presences of Uthman.

When the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, conquered Makkah, he forgave all of Quraysh, except for those who had been Muslims and returned to disbelief. One of those was Abdul lah ibn Abi Sarh, Uthman's half brother, who both had suckled at the breast of the same mother. The Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had ordered that he be killed because he had been one of those who had written the Qur'an when it was revealed. Abdullah fled to Uthman. Uthman took him to the Prophet and asked his forgiveness. As the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, loved Uthman, he agreed to forgive him.

Uthman had no specific role as an adviser concerning war or other matters. He was known for his great love of reciting the Qur'an. When the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, lay dying, he asked to see Uthman. When Uthman entered, the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, asked him to come close and told him something in his ear secretly. He asked him if he understood what he had told him, and Uthman told him that he had.



## Uthman in the Company of Abu Bakr and Umar

When the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, died, Abu Bakr was chosen as the first khalifah or leader of the Muslim community. Uthman was one of his advisers. Abu Bakr wanted to begin the jihad against the Romans in Syria. So he asked the Muslims about the way of doing that. They all disagreed about the way. When it came the turn for Uthman to speak, he said that Abu Bakr was a wise man so if he saw good for the benefit of Islam and the Muslims then it must be so. The Muslims agreed with what Uthman said and so they made jihad against Syria.

Uthman was not like other merchants. One day, Abd ar-Rahman ibn Auf was with him, when he was intending to buy some land. Uthman argued about the price. When they had agreed a price, Uthman paid the seller and then gave him an extra ten thousand dirhams. Then he told Abd ar-Rahman that he had heard the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, saying that Allah would reward a man with Paradise because he was faithful in his trading and feared Allah.

The Muslims suffered famine in Abu Bakr's



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time. Then a caravan of Uthman's, which had one thousand camels bearing food, arrived in Madinah. The merchants hurried to buy the food from Uthman in order to sell it to people for a profit. They started to bid but Uthman refused them all. He asked, "Who can offer me ten times as many dirhams as the value of the caravan in profit?" No-one could do that. He then said that Allah would reward him ten times over for every dirham that he spent for His sake. He gave all the caravan full of food to the hungry people of Madinah.

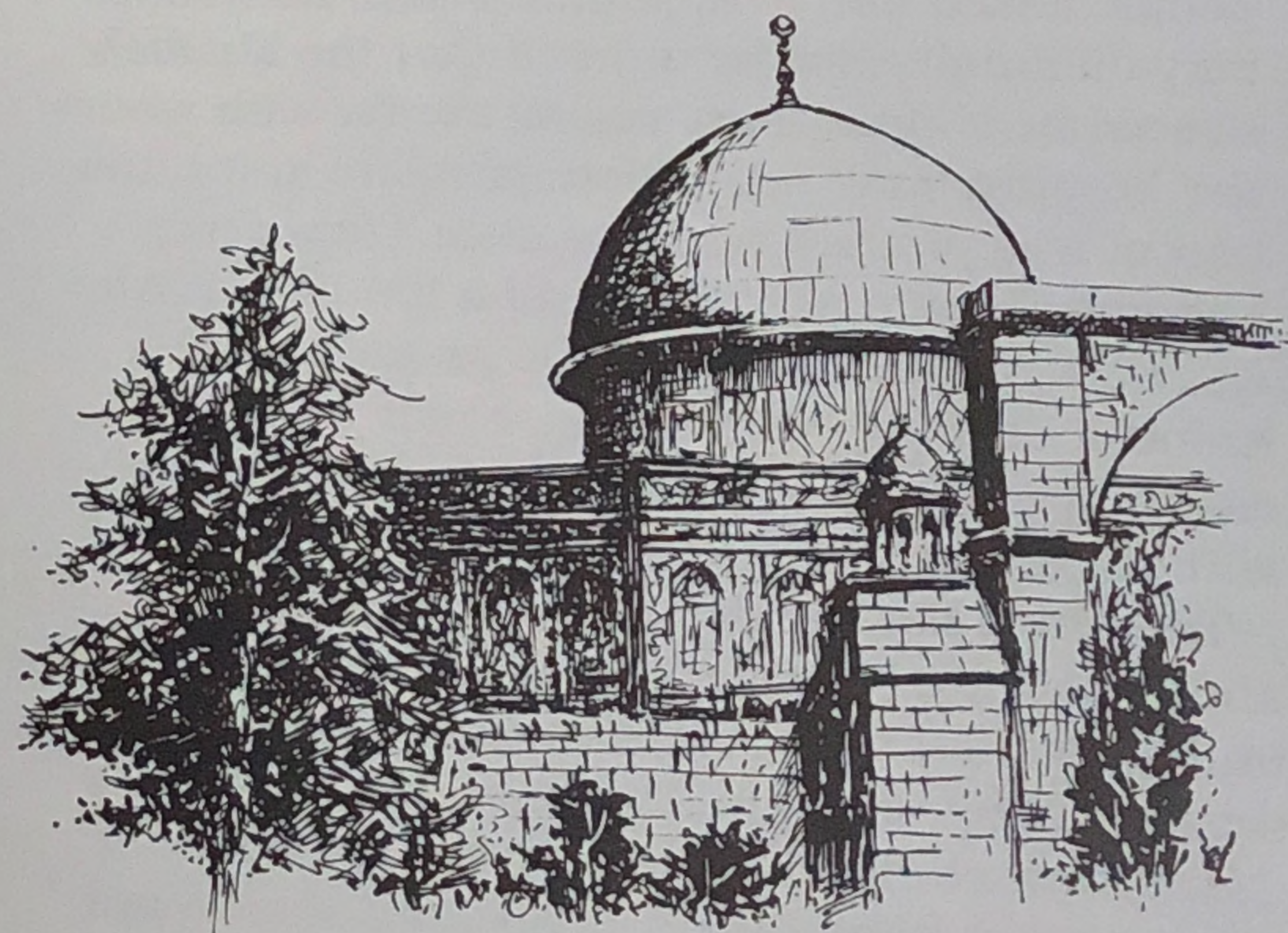
When Abu Bakr was dying, he called Uthman to write a letter announcing the next khalifah. While Uthman was writing, Abu Bakr lost consciousness without saying the name of the man he would make the next khalifah. Uthman wrote the name of Umar ibn al-Khattab. When he awoke, Abu Bakr asked Uthman to read what he had written. Uthman read out that Abu Bakr appointed Umar as the next khalifah. When Abu Bakr learnt that Uthman had written Umar's name and not his own name, he said, "Allahu Akbar! Even if you had written your own name, you would have been worthy of it."

Then Abu Bakr asked Uthman what he thought about Umar. Uthman said that Umar was a brave and wise Muslim, even though he was a little severe. When the people swore to obey Umar as the second khalifah, Uthman was the first man to promise to obey him.

Umar used to always ask him his views. They agreed and disagreed about different things, yet they were always close to each other. The thing

### *Uthman ibn Affan*

which they disagreed about was when the people of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) asked Umar to come to make a treaty with them. Most Muslims disagreed about his going there but Ali agreed that Umar should go. Ali thought that it was better to enter Al-Quds peacefully than in war. He also disagreed with Amr ibn al-As when he wanted to conquer Egypt in his period as khalifah. Umar loved Uthman even when they disagreed.





### *Uthman in the Company of Abu Bakr and Umar*

time. Then a caravan of Uthman's, which had one thousand camels bearing food, arrived in Madinah. The merchants hurried to buy the food from Uthman in order to sell it to people for a profit. They started to bid but Uthman refused them all. He asked, "Who can offer me ten times as many dirhams as the value of the caravan in profit?" No-one could do that. He then said that Allah would reward him ten times over for every dirham that he spent for His sake. He gave all the caravan full of food to the hungry people of Madinah.

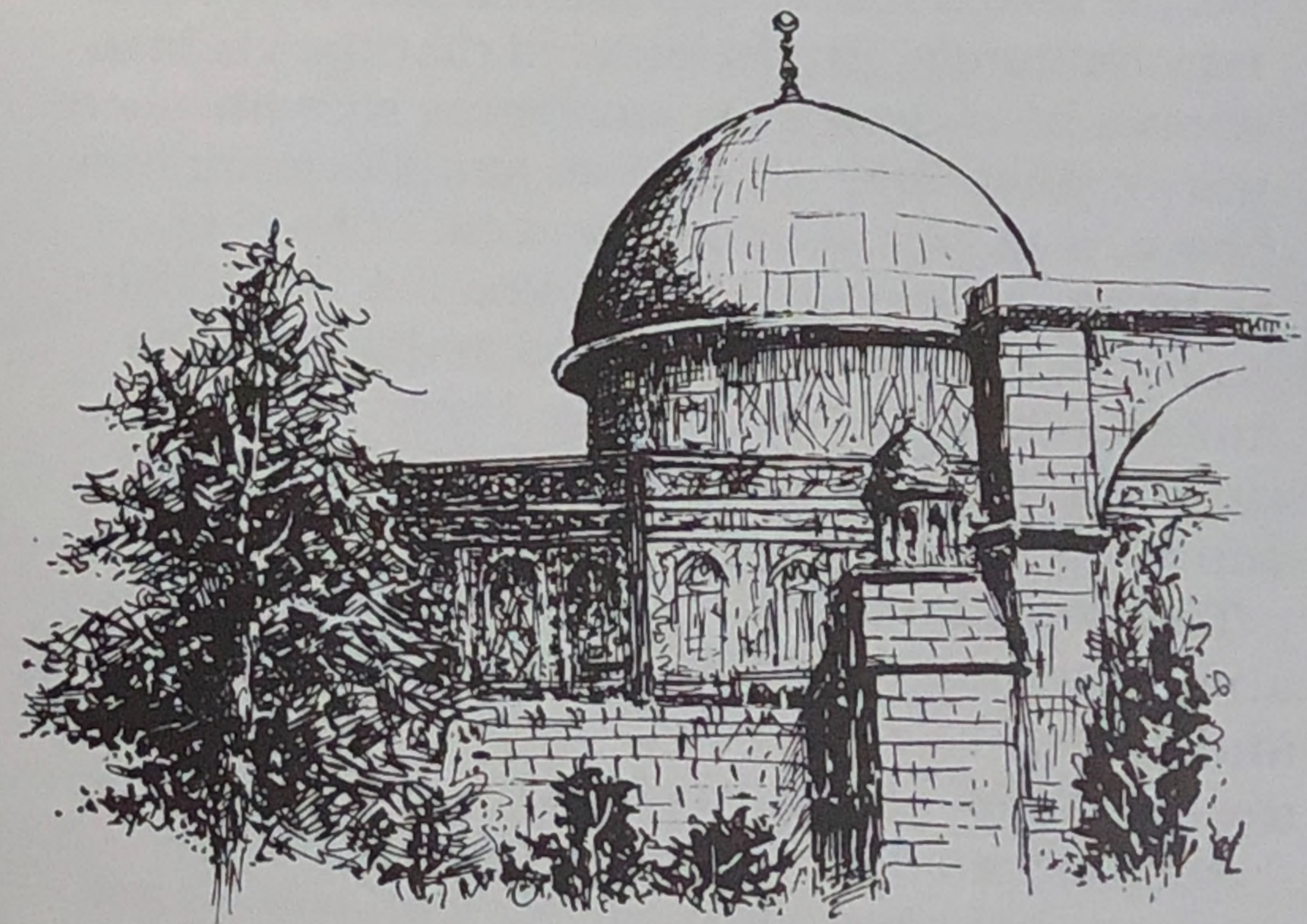
When Abu Bakr was dying, he called Uthman to write a letter announcing the next khalifah. While Uthman was writing, Abu Bakr lost consciousness without saying the name of the man he would make the next khalifah. Uthman wrote the name of Umar ibn al-Khattab. When he awoke, Abu Bakr asked Uthman to read what he had written. Uthman read out that Abu Bakr appointed Umar as the next khalifah. When Abu Bakr learnt that Uthman had written Umar's name and not his own name, he said, "Allahu Akbar! Even if you had written your own name, you would have been worthy of it."

Then Abu Bakr asked Uthman what he thought about Umar. Uthman said that Umar was a brave and wise Muslim, even though he was a little severe. When the people swore to obey Umar as the second khalifah, Uthman was the first man to promise to obey him.

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## Who is the Next Khalifah?

**W**hen Umar was dying, he didn't decide who would be the next khalifah. When the doctor came to him and saw that he was dying, he advised him to appoint the next khalifah. Umar said that the next khalifah should be a better man than him. When people asked him to appoint his son, he refused very definitely. But he ordered that the khalifah should be chosen from among the six with whom the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was pleased when he died. They were Uthman, Ali ibn Abi Talib, Talha ibn Ubaidillah, az-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, Abd ar-Rahman ibn Auf and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. Umar was undecided but he was sure that he couldn't leave it without a solution. He had seen what had happened when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had died. The Ansar and Muhajirun had quarrelled about who would be the first khalifah of the Muslims.

Umar asked Abu Talha al-Ansari to be his witness after him that those six men should not quarrel and that they had three days to decide which one of them should be the next khalifah.

### *Uthman ibn Affan*

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## The Kindness and Nobility of Uthman

**W**hen Umar died, the six companions came to the decision that Uthman ibn Affan should be the next khalifah. Uthman immediately started to write letters to the leaders of the Muslim fighting men which said:

"You are the protectors of Islam from the attacks of enemies. Umar gave some orders which I know about. In fact, he took my advice about them before giving them. So be careful, because I don't want to hear that anybody disobeys them. If you do that, I will replace you with someone better than you. You should always be careful of your behaviour. I will keep a watch over what Allah has entrusted to my care."

Then he wrote to the zakah collectors:

"Allah has created everything fairly and justly. He only accepts what is right and just. Give what is right and take what is right. Trust produces trust. Follow this strictly and

*Uthman ibn Affan*

do not fail to discharge it. Faithfulness produces faithfulness. Do not oppress orphans and those you have a treaty with. Allah will punish those who do so."

He advised them how to rule, to fear Allah, take care of the Muslims and not mistreat the Christians and the Jews. Finally, he said that peace is better than war. The principles that Uthman followed are the same as Allah mentions in His Noble Book. They were practised by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, Abu Bakr and Umar.

He kept the governors that Umar had appointed in the cities such as Makkah, Ta'if, Kufa, and the cities of Egypt, Syria and Palestine. Uthman increased the amount of welfare that was given to poor Muslims. He had no reason for that except that he was generous. Uthman's policy of increasing the donations to poor Muslims was a major change from Umar's way. Umar preferred to keep the bayt al-mal (the place where the zakah was kept) strong. The reason might be that Uthman saw that there was much more wealth than at Umar's time. Uthman may have thought that doing so would make him closer to the Muslims. But this policy of Uthman's was one of the reasons for the problems which occurred later. This kindness of Uthman was surrounded by danger.

People at first liked Uthman's policy more than Umar's. Uthman's decision to increase the amounts given to the Muslims was followed by



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## War On Sea and Land

**I**t was not unusual that those countries which had been conquered by the Muslims should revolt against them no matter what benefits the Muslims had brought them. The Muslims of Madinah and Makkah had a different religion, culture and tradition from the people of those countries.

The revolution in Uthman's time was not the first to occur. It had happened in Umar's time but the Muslims had been able to put a stop to them. Azerbaijan, with its neighbours, was one of the most recent countries the Muslims had conquered. They had done that under the leadership of Abd ar-Rahman ibn Rabi'ah. Abd ar-Rahman had decided to conquer the Turks but they took refuge in the mountains. As he prepared the army for attack he heard that Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, was dead, and so he had to stop. When Uthman became khalifah he ordered Abd ar-Rahman to continue what he has doing.

Uthman sent al-Walid ibn Uqbah to stop the revolution which had begun in Azerbaijan. Al-Walid was able to do that when Uthman supplied him with forty thousand soldiers. Uthman asked him to protect the borders of the Islamic commu-

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Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan had established a great navy to fight the Byzantines. He also asked for help as they approached to fight the Muslims. Uthman sent a message asking al-Walid ibn Uqbah to prepare an army to help their brothers in Syria. Then an army of eight thousand Muslims had marched to Syria, led by Salman ibn Abi Rabi'ah, and had defeated the Roman army. The Romans said that if the Muslims defeated them on land, they couldn't do that on sea. So they prepared a very big fleet to attack Alexandria from where they could enter Egypt.

Constantine the Second liked this plan, as the Muslims had not even a single ship in the Mediterranean Sea. The Romans' fleet consisted of three thousand ships and huge numbers of soldiers with their weapons. They made their way to Alexandria. Amr ibn al-As was clever. He refused to consider the plan of the man who suggested to go and fight them. He preferred that they stay where they were. Amr thought that when they allowed the Romans to enter Egypt they would treat the people badly and so they would hate them. That would be a great key for victory. Soon the battle started and the two sides met each other. The Muslims' army, under the command of Amr ibn al-As, was about fifteen thousand men.



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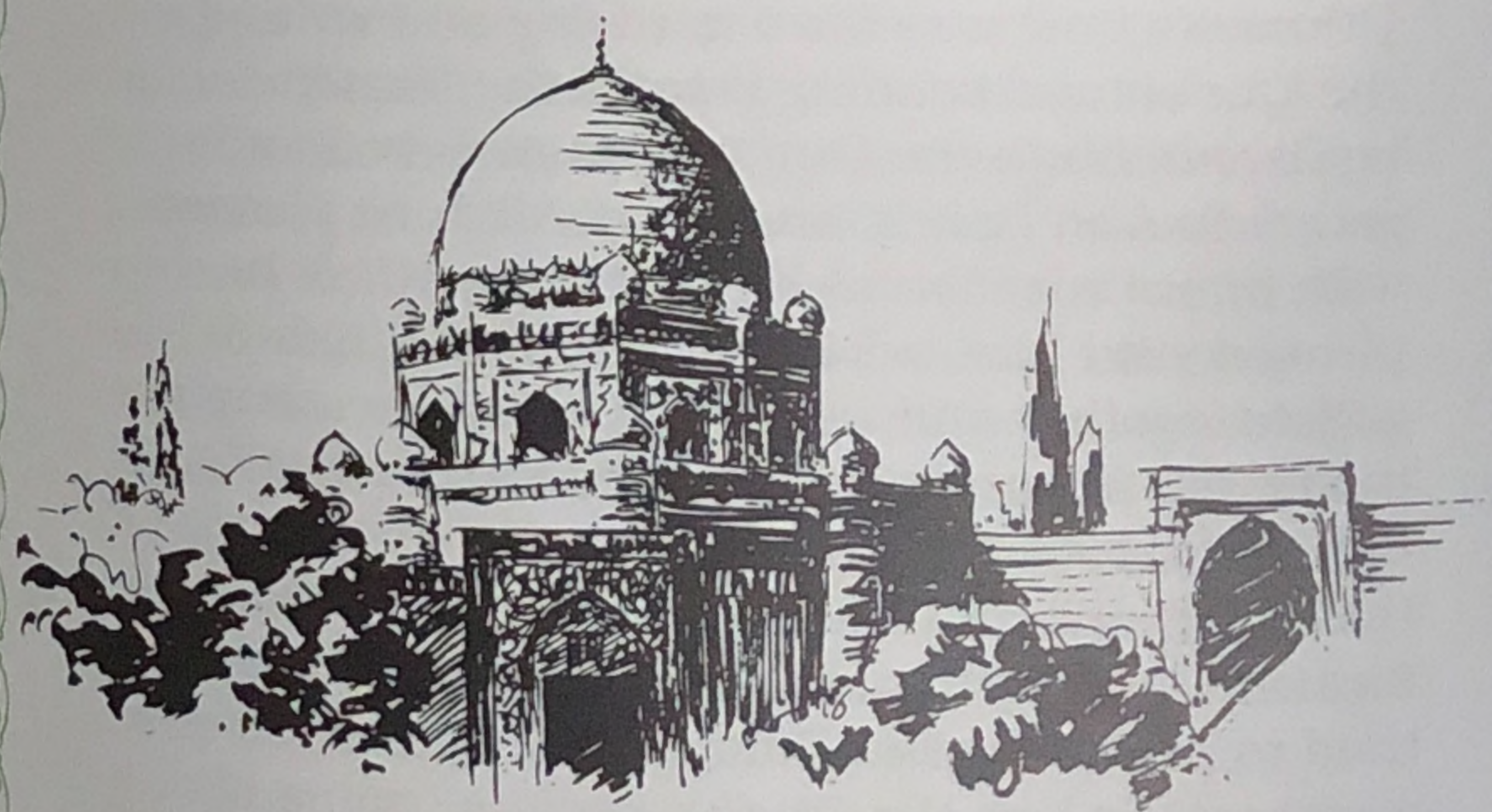
The Roman army under, the command of Manuwal, were almost one hundred thousand soldiers. As the fires of battle increased, one of the brave Muslim warriors was killed after he had killed a large number of enemy soldiers. Amr himself carried him from the battlefield and buried him. Then he returned to the battle. The Roman army couldn't withstand the strong fighting of the Muslims so they fled to Alexandria. But the Muslims conquered the city again. Manuwal was killed, most of his army fled and the rest were taken prisoner. In that place Amr built a mosque which he called ar-Rahmah (Mercy).

Not much later Uthman removed him from command and appointed his own half-brother Ibn Abi Sarh in his place. Abdullah ibn Ani Sarh wanted to continue his conquest of Africa, so Uthman gave him permission to do so. He also sent a supporting army under the command of Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr. As Abdullah reached them he found that the Muslim army and the enemy were already engaged in battle. Ibn az-Zubayr was surprised to find that Ibn Abi Sarh was not fighting. His excuse was the commander of the Roman army had offered a big reward to anyone who could kill him. Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr advised him to offer a big reward to whoever would kill the commander of the Roman army. Ibn az-Zubayr divided the army into two halves each of which fought for half a day allowing the other to rest. By this plan the Muslims won the battle and forced the Roman army to flee after the Muslims had taken a huge amount of booty. The Muslims were angry with Ibn Abi

### *Uthman as a Companion of the Prophet*

Sarh because they thought that he took from the booty more than he was allowed. They complained about him to Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him.

In Uthman's time, the Muslim community widened to include the North African coast, the island of Cyprus, and Armenia. Two strong fleets were established during Uthman's time. One was under Ibn Abi Sarh and the other under Muawiyyah. They were to defeat the Roman navy under the command of Constantine. In the year 34 AH, the Muslims defeated the Romans at a battle called as-Sawari.





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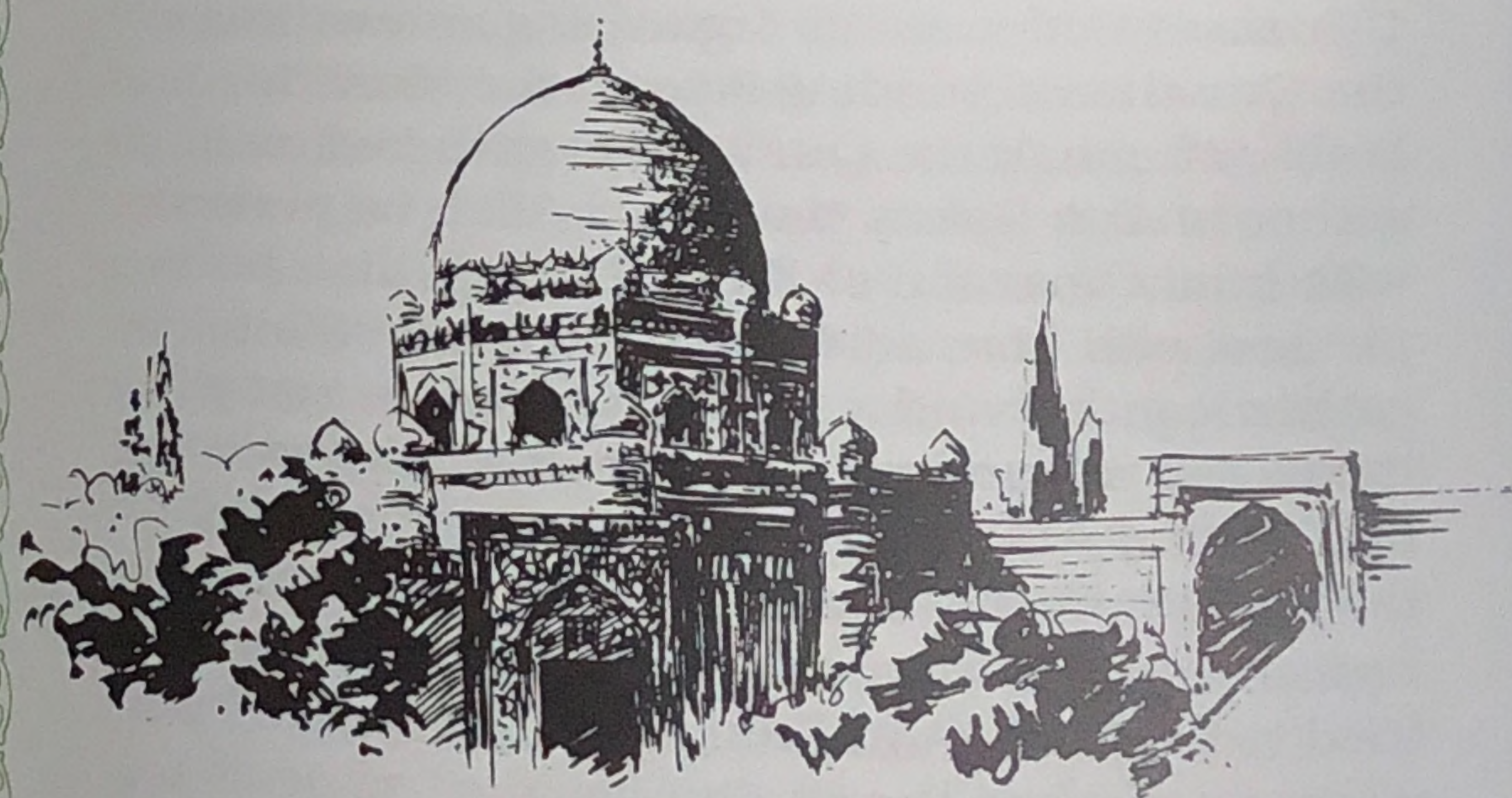
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## The Sad Ending

**T**he first five years of Uthman's era were years of happiness. People were well pleased with their khalifah. They felt safe because the Byzantine Romans had been defeated. But Uthman began to change the governors of the cities and countries who had been appointed by Umar. He was engaged gathering a correct edition of the Qur'an. And so people started to complain and cause interna trouble.

One of the most important achievements of Uthman's time was his organising and writing the Qur'an and sending it to all the Muslim lands, although the Qur'an was gathered together in Abu Bakr's time, may Allah be pleased with him. Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, advised the first khalifah to gather together and write the Qur'an as many of those who memorised it were being killed in battles. At first Abu Bakr refused to do something that the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had not done. Umar tried to persuade Abu Bakr by saying that they might totally lose the Qur'an because some of those who had memorised it had been killed

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Uthman sent for the copy which Hafsah had and he told Zaid ibn Thabit, Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, Sa'id ibn al-As and Abd ar-Rahman ibn al-Harith ibn Hisham to make copies of it. Uthman reviewed and gave it to some of the Companions to check. The final correct copy is known as the "Uthmani edition". Uthman then ordered that all other copies should be burnt. The copies which were written on pieces of leather or bone were buried between the Prophet's tomb and his mimbar in the mosque. This action added to his stature a great deal. He sent a copy to each country to be kept there in safe places where all could have access to them. However, his great work was exploited by those who were opposing him. They accused him of "burning the Qur'an". Ali ibn Abi Talib advised them to have more fear of Allah and not accuse him of that. He added that he himself would have done the same thing that Uthman had done, if he had been in his position.

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### *Uthman ibn Affan*

increasing number of Muslims.

In spite of all these good deeds, Uthman faced opposition from rioters and troublemakers from Kufa and other cities. There were a number of reasons for that. First, it was because of his simple administration. Second, because he had changed some of the governors who had governed in Umar's time. Third, there was a Jew from the Yemen, called Abdullah ibn Saba, who declared his Islam in Uthman's time. He then said that each prophet had left a relative as khalifah after him. He said that Ali should be that khalifah. Abdullah ibn Saba went to Kufa, Syria and Egypt to spread his ideas and to make trouble. Although rioters surrounded Uthman's house, he continued to go to the mosque and lead the prayer. Uthman was murdered on Friday, 8th Dhu'l-Hijjah, 35 AH (656 CE). With his death, the Muslims lost one of the most important of the khalifahs, a ruler who was known for his simplicity and kindness.

